

## ***CALIFORNIA JUDICIAL BRANCH***

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In California, as in the U.S. government, the power to govern is divided among three branches: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The California court system, the nation's largest, serves over 34 million people with more than 2,000 judicial officers and 18,000 court employees.

### **THE COURTS**

#### **CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT**

- ◆ Hears oral arguments in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento;
- ◆ Has discretionary authority to review decisions of the Courts of Appeal and direct responsibility for automatic appeals after death penalty judgments ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/about.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/about.htm)).

#### **COURTS OF APPEAL**

- ◆ Six districts, 19 divisions, 9 court locations;
- ◆ Review the majority of appealable orders or judgments from the superior courts ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/courtsofappeal/about.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/courtsofappeal/about.htm)).

#### **SUPERIOR COURTS**

- ◆ Fifty-eight courts, one in each county, with from 1 to 55 branches;
- ◆ State and local laws define crimes, specify punishments ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/trial/about.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/trial/about.htm)).

### **BRANCH ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY**

#### **JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA**

##### **Administrative Office of the Courts**

- ◆ The Judicial Council is the constitutionally created 27-member policymaking body of the California courts; its staff agency is the Administrative Office of the Courts ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc)).

### **BRANCH AGENCIES**

#### **COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS**

- ◆ Confirms gubernatorial appointments to the Supreme Court and appellate courts ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/otheragencies.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/otheragencies.htm)).

#### **COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE**

- ◆ Responsible for the censure, removal, retirement, or private admonishment of judges and commissioners. Decisions subject to review by the California Supreme Court ([www.cjp.ca.gov](http://www.cjp.ca.gov)).

#### **HABEAS CORPUS RESOURCE CENTER**

- ◆ Handles state and federal habeas corpus proceedings; provides training and resources for private attorneys who take these cases ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jobs/jobshcrc.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jobs/jobshcrc.htm)).